



U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Kansas

## NEWS RELEASE

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July 15, 2004

### GRAND JURY RETURNS INDICTMENTS

TOPEKA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that six individuals were indicted on July 14, 2004, by a federal grand jury in Topeka, Kansas. Those indicted include:

- **Craig L. Nickels**, 49, Clay Center, Kansas, is charged with one count of possessing over 600 images of child pornography including pictures of minors under the age of twelve on February 3, 2004, and one count of forfeiture of a computer and related equipment used to commit the offense.

If convicted, Nickels faces a maximum of ten years in federal prison without parole. Nickels is set to make his initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Topeka, Kansas, on July 27, 2004 at 11:00 a.m. The case was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Custom Enforcement and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tanya Treadway.

- **Michael Dean Rindt**, 36, Emporia, Kansas, currently in custody, is charged with one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm from February 2004 through April 5, 2004, in Emporia, Kansas.

If convicted, Rindt faces a maximum of ten years in federal prison without parole. Rindt is set to make his initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Topeka, Kansas, on July 19, 2004 at 10:30 a.m. The case was investigation by the Emporia Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Hendershot.

- **Cui Qin Zhang**, 36, Alhambra, California, currently in custody, is charged with one count of possession with the intent to distribute approximately 15 kilograms (approximately 33 pounds) of cocaine on June 27, 2004, and one count of

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possession with the intent to distribute approximately 15 kilograms (approximately 69,482 dosage units) of Ecstasy on June 27, 2004, both in Russell County, Kansas.

If convicted, Zhang faces a minimum of ten years and a maximum of life for possession with the intent to distribute cocaine and a maximum of twenty years for possession with the intent to distribute Ecstasy. Her initial appearance is set for July 19, 2004, at 2:00 p.m. in U.S. District Court in Topeka, Kansas. The case was investigated by Russell County Sheriff's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Anthony Mattivi.

- **Jose Perez Miranda**, 26, Dallas, Texas, currently in custody, is charged with one count of possession with the intent to distribute approximately 893 grams (approximately 1.96 pounds) of methamphetamine on June 8, 2004, in Lyon County, Kansas.

If convicted, Miranda faces a minimum of five years and a maximum of forty years in federal prison without parole. The case was investigated by the Lyon County Sheriff's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Hendershot.

- **Neil Alvin Smith**, 30, Lewisville, Texas, currently in custody, is charged with one count of possession with the intent to distribute approximately 27 grams (approximately .95 ounce) of methamphetamine; one count of being a user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm; and one count of using a firearm during a drug trafficking crime, all on June 5, 2004, in Lyon County, Kansas.

If convicted, Smith faces a minimum of five years and a maximum of forty years in federal prison, without parole, for possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine; a maximum of ten years for being a user of a controlled substance in possession of a firearm; and a minimum of five years and a maximum of life for using a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. The case was investigated by the Lyon County Sheriff's Office and the Drug Enforcement Administration and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Hendershot.

- **Felipe Curiel-Escarrega**, 43, Mexico, currently in custody, is charged with one count of being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm and one count of illegally entering the United States from Mexico, both on June 23, 2004, in Lyon County, Kansas.

If convicted, Curiel-Escarrega faces a maximum of ten years in federal prison, without parole, for being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm and a maximum of two years for illegally entering the United States. He is currently set to make his initial appearance in U.S.

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District Court in Topeka, Kansas, on July 19, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. The case was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Custom Enforcement and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Hough

As in any criminal case, a person is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The Indictments filed merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.